



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY ANTHONY J. JENKINS ANNOUNCES  
THE CONVICTION OF MELVILLE PARRIS FOR THE CHARGES OF  
FELON IN POSSESSION OF FIREARMS, FELON IN POSSESSION OF  
AMMUNITION AND FELON IN POSSESSION OF BODY ARMOR**

Anthony J. Jenkins, U.S. Attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands, today announced that Melville Parris, 45, of #309A Estate Grove Place was convicted on September 15, 2005 of being a felon in possession of firearms, ammunition and body armor after a four-day trial in District Court in St. Croix.

Evidence introduced during the trial showed that on September 10, 2004, the Virgin Islands Police Department received a call from a concerned citizen reporting that an individual was discharging shots in and around the Grove Place home. Police officers were dispatched to the scene and ultimately discovered within the bedroom of Melville Parris, body armor, a single barreled sawed-off shotgun, a 22 caliber pistol, and ammunition including a bandoleer containing blank rounds. Also found within the bedroom were target sheets and a stocking cap with two holes cut out. Parris is a convicted felon having been convicted in 1985 of the violent crime of first degree robbery and assault in the third degree for which he was sentenced to a term 20 years in prison.

The Sentencing Date for Parris' current offense has not yet been set by the Court. He is facing a maximum sentence of ten years imprisonment per firearm on the felon in possession of a firearm charges, ten years for the felon in possession of ammunition charge and three years for the felon in possession of body armor charge, in addition to fines as a result of the conviction.

The case was tried by Assistant U.S. Attorney Denise A. Hinds. U.S. Attorney Jenkins thanked the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms ("ATF") Special Agent in Charge, Julie Torres of the ATF, Miami Field Division whose agency assisted in the prosecution of the case. U.S. Attorney Jenkins also thanked the Virgin Islands Police Department ("VIPD") Commissioner Elton Lewis for the assistance given by VIPD in the apprehension of Melville Parris and the prosecution of the case. U.S. Attorney Jenkins also gave individual recognition to the lead case agents, ATF Special Agents Gregory Baker and Virgin Islands Police Detective Samuel Abraham.

This conviction was the result of a collaborative effort between the federal and local law enforcement agencies under a national effort to reduce gun violence through a program called Project Safe Neighborhoods ("PSN"). Under PSN, local and federal agents operate in a task force to reduce gun violence and to vigorously enforce federal and local gun laws.

U.S. Attorney Jenkins encourages the Virgin Islands community to contact law enforcement when they have information about criminal activity and thanked the concerned citizen in this case who reported the crime.